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MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Resumption of Air Operations for Propaganda
Purposes in the Balkans

1. As part of the psychological warfare operations under the Albanian Project BOFIEND, CIA has been conducting a program of propaganda leaflet and supply drops over Albania with excellent results according to reports from within that country. The drop operations are carried out by covert aircraft and hitherto involved both the distribution of propaganda leaflets and certain articles, including food, in the name of the National Committee for Free Albania. Confirming reports from inside, the success of these operations is also made evident by the verbal attack made by the Prime Minister, Enver Hoxha, at the recent Congress of the Albanian Communist Party, where he spoke of Albanian war criminals and reactionaries who were using the facilities placed at their disposal by "Anglo-American imperialists" to drop "rotten leaflets" and "poisoned food." Although the reference to poisoned food was undoubtedly intended to discourage Albanians from picking up such supplies as were distributed by us in the name of the Albanian National Committee, the timing of these accusations, coinciding as it does with the Soviet sponsored germ warfare campaign, led to the belief that it would be desirable to suspend propaganda air drops for two or three weeks in order to reassess the situation and determine whether such operations play in any way into the hands of the Communist propaganda experts. The decision to suspend operations was circulated orally.

2. More than two weeks have elapsed from the imposition of the temporary ban on propaganda air operations. Since the operational plans for the Albanian project, which is closely linked with an analogous British project, require propaganda leaflet drops at the end of the current month and at intervals of 6 to 8 weeks through the rest of the year, it is essential to furnish the field immediately with instructions as to whether the drop program is to be resumed and executed as originally planned. It is now felt that although the wisdom of dropping food at this time is still uncertain, the continuation of propaganda leaflet drops and drops of hard supplies such as needles will not provide the Communists with any tangible material which can be logically used against us in the bacterial warfare propaganda campaign. Any decision on our part to postpone further air operations would be merely yielding to their efforts to force us to discontinue an activity which they fear and which is very distasteful to them. It is therefore

proposed to resume

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proposed to resume propaganda leaflet and non-edible supply drops in the Balkan area in accordance with current plans. Your concurrence is requested.

3. It is expected that views on the desirability of resuming propaganda supply drops of food will become clarified within the next two or three weeks and will be communicated to you with recommendations in the near future. One point is clear, namely, that by raising the question of poisoned food at the height of the bacterial warfare propaganda campaign, the Albanian Communists were successful in arresting a clandestine operation which they were very anxious to stop.

[]
KILBOURNE JOHNSTON
Assistant Director for
Policy Coordination

SE/PC-GMY-awn
17 April 1952

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